

clean trail from the field to the house, so that the corn might be encouraged to stay at home and not go wandering elsewhere. Most of these customs have now fallen into dis-use excepting among the old people, by many of whom they are still religiously observed. Another curious ceremony, of which even the memory is now almost forgotten, was enacted after the first working of the corn, when the owner or priest stood in succession at each of the four corners of the field and wept and wailed loudly. Even the priests are now unable to give a reason for this performance, which may have been a lament for the bloody death of Selu," the Old Woman of the Corn.<sup>1</sup> In these Cherokee practices the lamentations and the invocations of the Old Woman of the Corn resemble the ancient Egyptian customs of lamenting over the first corn cut and calling upon Isis, herself probably in one of her aspects an Old Woman of the Corn. Further, the Cherokee precaution of leaving a clear path from the field to the house resembles the Egyptian Invitation to Osiris, "Come to thy house." So in the Indies to this day people observe elaborate ceremonies for the purpose of bringing back the Soul of the Rice from the fields to the barn.<sup>2</sup> The Nandi of British East Africa perform a ceremony in September when the eleusine grain is ripening. Every woman who owns a plantation goes out with her daughters into the cornfields and makes a bonfire of the branches and leaves of certain trees (the *Solanum campylanthnm* and *Lantana salvifolia*). After that they pluck some of the eleusine, and each of them puts one

grain in her  
 necklace, chews another and rubs It on her  
 forehead, throat,  
 and breast. " No joy Is shown by the womenfolk  
 on this  
 occasion, and they sorrowfully cut a basketful of  
 the corn  
 which they take home with them and place in  
 the loft to  
 dry." <sup>3</sup>

Just as the Egyptians lamented at  
 cutting the corn,  
 so the Karok Indians of California lament at  
 hewing the

<sup>1</sup> J. Mooney, " Myths of the of the crop " arid " the  
 first working of  
 Cherokee," *Nineteenth Annual Re- the corn.*"  
*fort of the Bureau of American* <sup>2</sup> *Spirits of*  
*the Corn and of the*  
*Rthnohgy* (Washington, 1900), pp. *Wild*, i. 180 *sqg.*  
 423 *sq.* I do not know what precisely <sup>3</sup> A. C. Hollis, *The*  
*Nandi* (Oxford,  
 the writer means by "the last working 1909), p. 46.